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Student-Athletes' Attitudes and Beliefs Towards Social Media

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May 2015


To the Dean of the Graduate School:


We are submitting a thesis written by Emily Boissonneault, entitled STUDENT-
ATHLETES' ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS TOWARDS SOCIAL MEDIA

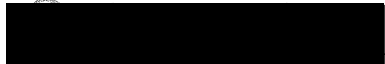
We recommend acceptance in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Sports and Fitness Administration


Thesis Adviser


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Dean, College of Education


Dean, Graduate School

STUDENT-ATHLETES' ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS TOWARDS SOCIAL MEDIA

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty
Of the
Richard W. Riley College of Education
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the
Requirements for the Degree
Of
Master of Science
In Sport and Fitness Administration
Winthrop University

April, 2015

By

Emily Boissonneault

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify the attitudes and beliefs of student athletes towards social media. To address this question, student athletes completed a survey focused specifically on: the image they present on social media profiles, content included, and their thoughts on the social media education provided by their athletic department. Student athlete (SA) responses were also compared to non-athletes (NA) for a better understanding of social media profiles. Frequencies showed strong similarities in a number of content shared or not shared, like humorous photos (SA 74.1% and NA 73.3%) and sexy photos (SA 82.4% and NA 82.6%). Differences were also present in a Man Whitney *U*-test. The significant differences all scored below $p < 0.05$ in the content of birthdays, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, athletic photos, and personal beliefs and values. Data also showed the need for student athlete education in social media. Data showed a large miscommunication between athletic departments and student athletes as 60% of student athletes believed there was a social media policy in place when in fact there is not. Additionally, regarding the image student athletes believe they present on social media, there was a divide between characteristics that presented a positive (fun, friendly, humorous etc.) and negative (irresponsible, immature, offensive etc.) image. However, future research is needed to show athletes perceptions of appropriateness and effective social media education.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 – Introduction	
<i>Significance of the Study.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Statement of the Problem.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Research Question</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Delimitations</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Limitations</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Definition of Terms</i>	<i>5</i>
Chapter 2 – Review of Literature	
<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>The Marketers and Consumers of Social Media</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Collegiate Institution Social Media Content and Privacy</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>The Negatives of Social Media and Student Athletes</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>The Positive Uses of Social Media</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Conclusion.....</i>	<i>18</i>
Chapter 3 – Methods and Procedures	
<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Participants</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Research Design.....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Procedures.....</i>	<i>22</i>
Chapter 4 – Results	
<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Research Question 1.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Hypothesis 1</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Hypothesis 2.....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Hypothesis 3.....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Hypothesis 4.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Research Question 2.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Hypothesis 1</i>	<i>26</i>
Chapter 5 – Discussion	
<i>Discussion</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Future Research.....</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Conclusion.....</i>	<i>37</i>
Appendices	
<i>IRB Form</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>Informed Consent Agreement.....</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>IRB Memo.....</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Copy of the Instrument</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Copy of Athlete Correlations</i>	<i>54</i>
References	55

List of Tables

Table 1 – <i>Mann Whitney U-Test for Content Shared</i>	29
Table 2 – <i>Athlete Frequencies for Characteristics</i>	30

Chapter 1

Introduction

Significance of Study

Investigating the behaviors and attitudes of collegiate athletes and social media is a pressing matter due to its rapid growth in use and indefinite limitations. Social media grows in product and variety annually and as social media continues to propagate so does the number of users. Approximately 80% of collegiate students admit to accessing Facebook alone, at least once a day (Kittinger, Correia, & Irons, 2010) out of their 1.06 billion monthly active users (Facebook, 2012). Up until 2010, Instagram had 150 million monthly active users with an average of 55 million photos shared daily (Instagram, 2010). The accessibility and simplicity of social media is one of the many reasons why it is popular and as the social media society in America continues to grow, it becomes an access point for fans and followers to access collegiate athletes. As part of the brand of a collegiate athletic department and often the university as a whole, student athletes are in the spotlight more often than others. Social media creates a simple connection between fans and athletes. With that being said, the use of social media by collegiate athletes is a fragile one due to the exposure and convenience it creates.

Gangdharbatla (2007) explored social media and collegiate students to find that many students use it as a means to fit in or provide an identity that displays a characteristic they do not portray in order to belong. Other researchers have investigated the use of social media and its popularity (Sanderson, 2011), in order to comprehend the best ways to capitalize on it as a tool for advertisement by both organizations and self (Wikemper, Lim, & Waldburger, 2012). More specific researchers have analyzed social

media and athletes to identify the negative roles that can be generated through social media (McGannon, Hoffmann, Metz, & Schinke 2012). Sanderson (2011) has even identified possible lack of social media limitations created by different collegiate institutions and different ways that the athletes respond to negative comments through social media (2012).

Social media has been a new concern for collegiate athletic departments as they provide a direct connection to a virtual community. Often fans, future employers, and rivals may use social media to connect to collegiate athletes, Witkemper, Hoon Lim, Waldbuger (2012), Browning, and Sanderson (2012) investigated the recent usages and effects. Exploring the subject of social media and collegiate athletes is crucial in order to help identify and possibly eliminate the many negative uses of social media by student athletes. This is to help ensure a safe transition from high school student, to collegiate athlete, and finally, to professional. The purpose of this study is to understand the beliefs and attitudes of student athletes towards social media in order to aid in the success of student athletes, which in turn should translate to a more positive brand for each student's university by appropriately addressing, responding, or updating their knowledge on social media.

Statement of the Problem

Social media has become a gateway for collegiate students to present an image they believe will fulfill their need to belong and fit in (Gangdharbatla, 2007). As a student, student athletes are a part of this culture and are often unaware of the consequences of possible negative images presented on social media. Some examples included illegal activities like underage drinking, derogatory language, and criticism of

other teams (Sanderson, 2011). The severities of these issues are different depending on the harshness: however, team atmosphere, successfulness, the institution image, and the future of many student athletes is sacrificed from poor decisions a student athlete might make through social media. Therefore, by identifying a pattern of attitudes and beliefs of student athletes and social media, the rate of success and future of many student athletes can be positively influenced by the ability to identify the area of error and production of proper social media education.

Research Question and Hypothesis

RQ: What are the attitudes and beliefs of student athletes towards Social Media?

H1: It was hypothesized that student athletes are aware of the image they are presenting on social media and are okay with others viewing their profiles.

H2: It was hypothesized that 70% of student athletes have had a comment, picture, or link on their social media profile that included, inappropriate profanity, pictures including alcohol or are sexually revealing, comments regarding alcohol or drugs, and/or bullying.

H3: It was hypothesized that student athletes are not aware of the negative impacts social media can have on the individual user and the institution they represent.

H4: It was hypothesized that student athletes are not being educated on Social Media and the negative impacts it can have on the individual user and the institution they represent.

RQ2: Do social media profiles of a student athlete differ from those of the non-athlete student body?

H1: It was hypothesized that 70% of the social media profiles of a student athlete and the non-athlete student body include the same content.

Delimitations

This study was comprised of student athletes and the general student body population from a mid-major Southern Division I University. There are many ways in which one might study student athletes' behavior and attitudes towards social media, however, for consistency, control, and convenience, these subjects will be most valuable for preliminary research.

1. NCAA Student Athletes at a mid-major Division I University ages 18-25.
2. General Students (non-athletes) that will be used to study the correlation between student athlete and student.
3. Male and Female
4. The study included women's volleyball, men's baseball, men and women's basketball, men and women's soccer, men and women's track, men and women's cross-country, men and women's tennis, and men and women's golf student athletes.
5. The number of student athletes at the university is 310; 150 student athletes and 100 non-athletes was the goal for this research..

To collect the data, each student completed a survey created based on the survey, "A Survey on Social Networking Sites" created by Peluchette and Karl (2008). Two surveys were administered; one general survey and the second included an additional section that applied to the student athletes only. These surveys were used to identify the behaviors and attitudes that students and student athletes have towards social media.

Although there are many ways to dissect this topic, a survey allows for a larger study group that can aid in the consistency of the research.

Limitations

Limitations to this research included the honesty of the participants and consistency of answers. This research was also limited by the size and number of athletic teams offered at the institution. The university offers a variety of different sports; however, it did not have one of the largest revenue generating sports, football. Without football as a part of this study it eliminates one of the most beloved sports in America that could provide very important information for application of results. Furthermore, the small size of this institution and its absence of football may be a limitation in need of future research.

Further limitations include the coaching staff or university athletic department social media beliefs and limitations. This research is focusing on the student athletes, however, the role and impact of coaches and athletic department is important to fully understand prevention and education of social media issues.

Definition of Terms

Social Media/Social Networking Sites. For this study, social media and social networking sites will be defined as forms of web based communication through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Student Athletes/Collegiate Athletes. For this study, student/collegiate athletes will refer to any NCAA Division I athlete between the ages 18 and 23.

Virtual Community. For this study, a virtual community refers to a group of people sharing the same form of communication via the web.

Team Cancer. “A team cancer identity is regarded as the product of individual, social, and cultural narratives which interact to create particular meanings concerning” the team identity in a negative aspect (McGannon, Hoffmann, Metz, & Schinke, 2012, p. 27).

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Introduction

This study sought to understand the attitudes and beliefs student athletes have towards social media. Due to the lack of studies created on student athletes, the following literature review was comprised using a variety of research. Fields of study included the use of social media marketing, collegiate institution social media content and privacy, the negative uses, and positive uses of social media. Together this information creates a baseline for the research by presenting social media through many disciplines and develops an argument for the need for proper education.

The Marketers and Consumers of Social Media

There are two facets of social media both of which are equally important. The first are the organizations or companies that use social media for marketing, in the case of this study, they would be the athletic institution and their student athletes as they market to fans and future students. The second are those who use social networking sites to connect with the organizations. In the case of this study, the student athletes are associated with their athletic departments and as individual users.

Marketers. Organizations, companies, and athletic departments are all marketers that use social media sites, and significantly rely on these resources for communication and promotion of their product or identity. The uses and possibilities for social media have skyrocketed in recent years and are now not only viewed as promotion tactics, but the glue that is necessary to strengthen and communicate with consumers (Judson, Devasagayam, & Bluff, 2012). Researchers have identified online marketing and social

media use as an effective form of communication with consumers (Gangadharbatla, 2007).

Regarding sports marketing in particular, Pronschinske, Groza, and Walker (2012) focused on the marketing of professional sport teams through Facebook. They identified that making authentic and engaging profiles created positive factors that improved their fan base. Furthermore, it is more common for sports organizations to participate in online marketing because the cost is so minimal; they can target specific groups, and service information conveniently (Walker, Kent, & Vincent, 2011).

In a study by Cunningham and Bright (2012), they provide research that identifies athlete endorsements in social media. They found that athlete-product congruency had a positive impact on social media promotion of products. With this in mind, they also identified that athlete expertise and trustworthiness was more important to a consumer than appearance. This is crucial for the development of athletic department marketing as athletes often act as a marketing tactic to bring in fans, sponsors, and recruits.

Consumers. The consumers are those who act as the user who engages in the organizations marketing or in the case of this study, interact through social media sites. Reasons why someone may interact through social media sites can be identified in a number of categories like, internet self-efficacy, the need for a cognitive conversation or read, the feeling of belonging, or collective self-esteem (Gangadharbatla, 2007).

Witkemper, Hoon Lim, and Waldburger (2012) investigated social media and sports marketing motivations of Twitter. In their article they examined four different motivations: information motivation, pass-time motivation, fanship motivation, and entertainment motivation. This theory offers explanation to why organizations would

want to create marketing ventures through social networking and also provides valid information directed towards student athletes specifically. In turn, it has identified that social media is used also for connecting with organizations, research, and a notion to belong.

Collegiate Institution Social Media Content & Privacy

Although face-to-face contact is not generally created through social networking sites, personal profiles are created in order to create more intimate contact. Meaning address, date of birth, personal interests, work, school, family, and personal photos can be used. A study by Browning and Sanderson (2012) focused on student athletes and the positives and negatives of Twitter, they identified three primary uses of Twitter. They included, to keep in contact with friends, communicate with followers, and access information. Social media has been identified as a platform for sports marketing both collegiate and beyond. However, creating opportunities for fans to follow or connect with student athletes eliminates the athlete's privacy. Furthermore, it begins to eliminate the control a college athletic department may have on information shared with the media. For this matter, many institutions have created guidelines and/or rules in which student athletes must follow in order to appropriately market their brand.

Collegiate Institution Social Media Policies. A study by Sanderson (2011), investigated the collegiate athlete handbooks at numerous NCAA Division I institutions in order to identify common verbiage and regulations for student athletes and social media. He found that of 249 schools only 159 contained social media policies which ranged from 33-1037 words. From these 159 handbooks, he furthered the investigation by focusing on the content restrictions, possible organizations monitoring the sites, the risks

included in social media, and the dialect used to present the guidelines. Sanderson found that the personal contact information and inappropriate picture sharing were the highest content restrictions, followed by inappropriate comments, language, team information, and criticism of any teams or schools. Team and school personnel were identified as the number one monitoring source, however, some schools also mentioned online predators, potential employers, graduate schools or internships, media personnel, and law enforcement (presented in order of most common to least). Furthermore, Sanderson found five areas of risk mentioned throughout his research. The first was lack of control over online content once it has been posted or added. The second warned collegiate athletes of the trouble they could cause on others. Third warned them of diligent safeguard, fourth included cautionary tales of other athletes who had been harmed by the impacts of social media, and finally the negative future impact on careers. Sanderson also found that many of the policies were written in context that identified underage drinking or illegal activities both NCAA regulations and the law as prohibited from social media. He identifies that in some ways, this is promoting the “do not get caught” (Sanderson, 2011, p. 507) motto. Furthermore, many coaches now placed in charge of monitoring the social media of their athletes do not put enough emphasis on the importance of social media, which again enables negative choices.

Sanderson (2011) noted that according to public relation departments, social media has created many unnecessary problems because of social media. Therefore, although there are brief explanations regarding social media policies, issues are still occurring. Bradley Patterson, a football player from North Alabama University, was dismissed from his team after making racial slurs towards President Obama (*North*

Alabama Player Booted from Team over Racist Tweet about Obama, 2012). Jamal Shuman, a football player from Elon University was also dismissed from his team when he tweeted negative comments that included inappropriate language regarding his coach and teammates. During his Tweets, Shuman also made it clear that he was unaware that others could retweet his own comments, getting him in further trouble (Fraser, 2011).

Social Media Privacy. What is unique to social networking sites is the implication that social media is exclusive to the followers that one accepts. This privacy blocker gives the user control to who can see their profile or follow their updates. As much as one may think this would or could control the amount of viewers to a particular page, a study by Lemieux (2012) proves that this may not be the case. Lemieux (2012) conducted a study to analyze how many collegiate students would add another unknown student as a friend on Facebook. The results were clear. Over a six-week span 72% of students accepted a fictional student Lemieux had created. Furthermore, research suggests that the psychological well-being and self-esteem of a college student can be effected by the number of friends one student may have on Facebook (Kalpidou, Costin, & Morris, (2011). Additionally, students are more likely to add unknown users who have similar profiles, for example, if they attend the same college. With this research in mind, how secure, or private can an account truly be? There is also an extent to which social media sites promote behaviors of stalking as acceptable behavior (Kennedy, 2009), increasing the risk that a student athlete is vulnerable on social media.

Content is not private once mentioned or imputed on social networking sites. In turn many athletic departments have created guidelines to avoid these problems.

However, without a dedicated department and proper education regarding social media, its' misuses can easily be over looked (Sanderson, 2011).

The Negatives of Social Media and Student Athletes

There are a number of ways to misuse social media, however, to stay true to social media and student athletes, there are four significant negatives to social media use that will be addressed. The first is the social media norms of a collegiate student versus a student athlete. The second is the additional pressure from critical comments. The third refers to the formation of the "Team Cancer" (McGannon, Hoffmann, Metz, & Schinke, 2012, p. 26) and finally, fourth is the ripple effect, which is the idea that one small motion can result in many more.

Social Norms of Collegiate Students and Social Media. Social media provides excessive outlets to connect critics and fans to athletes and teams. Furthermore, it has been found that direct interactions through social media with athletes can be harmful through critical responses to an athlete's play. Branding is a way in which people are known or viewed. Social media allows for people to brand or present themselves in a manner in which they wish. Peluchette and Karl (2010) conducted a study that inquired whether or not Facebook users are conscious about the image they are trying to portray versus what they are portraying. Students used in this study identified four different images they were trying to portray which included the ability to appeal to the opposite sex, wild characteristics, fun and friendly, and/or offensive. After participants identified their profile characteristics they were asked if they felt comfortable sharing their profiles with family, employers, and strangers. Most students were okay with family and strangers viewing their profile but found it unlikely that it would occur. On the other

hand, the author learned that about 77% of employers now use Facebook as part of their hiring process. This change in the hiring system will have a negative effect on those who do not maintain a healthy image. However, as much as students need to prepare for the future employers, they also need to be conscious of the brand they are representing or creating as a collegiate athlete. No longer must student athletes only be aware and prepared for critical comments, they must also recreate or edit their personal profile in order to be in compliance with the NCAA and their athletic department to portray a clean and healthy participant of collegiate athletics. For many of these students that means having to escape the collegiate norms.

Critical Comments Directed at Student Athletes. Although social media can provide student athletes with more communication with fans, it can also direct negative attention and critics that otherwise may not affect an athlete's play and/or brand. By opening communication between athletes and fans, it allows negative beliefs or critics to get back to the student athlete. Therefore, social media creates a simplistic, speedy, and impulsive response that can increase the number of retaliation responses. The article by Browning and Sanderson (2012) identified four ways that student athletes ingest and respond to tweets. A group of athletes said they could not care less, others ignored the content but the problem remained in their head, and others said it provided more motivation to do well in the next contest. With this connection, social media is bringing more outside pressure on to the collegiate athletes to perform and in some cases, to verbally respond. Either way, social media begins to pull in athletic department outsiders that can cause negative issues even with the current monitoring system enforced by the

athletic institutions. Browning and Sanderson (2012) also brought up the discussion that education might be a more optimal solution to this problem.

The Team Cancer. One of the most difficult things for collegiate athletic departments is identifying with students the difference between freedom of speech and representing something bigger than ones self. Take Bradley Patterson, from North Alabama University, as discussed earlier in this article. It only took one comment made regarding racial slurs for the entire athletic department to change the way they monitored and addressed social media. All of the students on his team and school suffered from his actions (Fraser, 2011). “Team Cancer” (McGannon, Hoffmann, Metz, & Schinke, 2012, p. 26) is a term that has been created from athletes who bring negative characteristics to a team. A team cancer may be manipulative, narcissistic, distracting, and cause internal conflicts etc. The theory is that a team cancer can influence other athletes’ psychological experience, impair the team process, and reduce athletic performance (both team and individual). In this particular study, the authors use the NHL player Sean Avery. Sean Avery made negative comments towards a player of an opposing team and a past girlfriend. Although this may seem as retaliation or jealousy, in the hockey world it was an ethical disgrace that questioned the integrity of the athlete and the sport. He was labeled as a team cancer for bringing down the team in this instance. Social media provides a simple impulse way to voice ones opinion, which can further enable a team cancer.

The Ripple Effect. A common effect that can be related to the team cancer is the effect negative social media can have on an institution, coaching staff, and players.

Schrotenboer (2006) noted that coaches might have more to lose, as negative photos and

comments can hurt their entire team, recruiting, and in turn, their job. Due to the accessibility of social media, many recruits and incoming freshman use social media to learn more about the players and institution, therefore, students are promoting the university and not simply their individual brand. Strickland (2006) says that athletic departments operate like a business and athletes are the products that create the funds for their business. One negative social media post can result in a larger effect than what one might think. Peluchette and Karl (2008) identify that student athletes are simply naïve regarding the consequences concerning the access and use of such information.

Student Athletes who have suffered the Consequences of Social Media. The negative uses on social media displayed by student athletes are not simply being identified because society thinks that they are wrong, they are being identified because of the poor image these collegiate athletes are projecting as an individual athlete, teammate, and member of their academic and athletic institution. These poor decisions often lead to major consequences that many students don't think about in the short moments they take to post something online. Below are some instances in which collegiate athletes have paid the price for negative uses of social media.

- The entire Catholic University lacrosse team was suspended from school after posting photographs of hazing on Facebook (Roper, 2007).
- Female soccer players at San Diego State University were penalized for pictures they posted online of alcohol (Schrotenboer, 2006).

- Two athletes at the Louisiana State University swim team were dismissed from the team when they posted degrading comments about the swim coaches (Brady & Libit, 2006).

The First Amendment. The First Amendment is another area within social media that for collegiate institutions can provide some uncomfortable feelings and likely, the NCAA as well. Due to a lack of knowledge and expertise in this area it is hard for the legal side of social media to keep up. Furthermore, there are a lot of factors that go into determining whether or not the First Amendment of someone is denied. For example, the type of school (private or public) as well as the “time, place, and manner” (Farber 2010)

The Positive Uses of Social Media

Although there are many precautions to social media and student athlete use, there are many ways that an athletic department and student athletes can use social media to positively influence their school and themselves.

Accessibility. A study, focused on sports marketing and social media identified that using social media allows organizations to focus on two core components of marketing, a way of promotion and interactions with consumers. Although collegiate athletics does not sell a product like Nike or Adidas, they still need to market their university athletics in order to profit from their program and allow for a growth in their brand name. It was noted that information, entertainment, pastime, and fanship were all motivations to follow and have a positive impact on sports marketing endeavors via twitter (Witkemper, Hoon Lim & Waldburger, 2012). A study by Judson, Devasagayam, and Buff (2012) also identified the positive uses of branding and marketing via social networking sites. They discovered that communities were being created through these

online marketing strategies that helped construct a stronger brand for the company.

Furthermore, they discovered that it wasn't always the duration of the visits to each of the organizations websites but the frequency (2012). Therefore, it could be argued that the more opportunities or frequency of a product, athlete, or team more branding and fanship can occur.

In the Workplace. Another study examined Twitter and its intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of users and those who use it in the workplace. This research showed that work-oriented people found Twitter convenient and useful within the workplace to conclude that using social media within a work place can help develop and share ideas (Argifoglio, Metallo, Black, & Ferrara, 2012). By learning to develop these skills and use them amongst colleagues and classmates, the use of Twitter can prove to be a positive tool to develop within athletes and athletic departments.

Promotions and Endorsements. Social media provides many opportunities for promoting brands, product, and events. According to Park, Kee, and Valenzuela (2009), Facebook has been crucial in being able to do this. What is unique about Facebook is that it continues to evolve; Park, Kee and Valenzuela (2009) identified Facebook Groups as one of the many components in which one may access information in groups of interest. Their research identifies four needs in which narrows down what people get out of a Facebook Group, they are, socializing, entertainment, self-status seeking, and information. As mentioned in an earlier article by Witkemper, Hoon Lim, and Waldburger (2012) social media users follow athletes on Twitter in order to pass-time, gain information, fanship, and entertainment. Both Facebook groups and twitter can help link future athletes, sponsors, and fans as research helps to prove why these social media

sources are important to its users and marketers. By using these sources athletic departments are likely to see a positive fan reaction and possible interaction.

LinkedIn and Future Employment. Social media is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. LinkedIn is an additional social media hub that is on the rise in the business world. LinkedIn (2013) identifies itself as a professional network that helps its users access people, jobs, news, and updates to help those searching to become experts in their field. With 225 million members in over 200 countries and access to job openings, LinkedIn provides a social networking site that works similar to Facebook to connect professionals. With the ability to help prepare young adults entering the job circuit, LinkedIn is a new and competitive weapon within the online marketing world (Kaufman, 2013). The ability to learn and use this network within an athletic department can both help in the exposure of the department and aid in the growth and professionalism amongst its athletes.

Conclusion

As the virtual marketing in athletic departments continues to grow in order to keep up with mainstream companies and organizations, student athletes are now pushed to the forefront of this endeavor through association. Providing more opportunities to thrive as leaders and prepare for future business. By harnessing these skills both student athletes and athletic departments can benefit from developing these skills to in turn, strengthen their brand. This research works to develop the current attitudes and beliefs student athletes have towards social media in order to help address and educate these theories.

Chapter 3

Methods and Procedures

Introduction

Social media connects its users with people all over the world. Regarding social media and personal branding and marketing, celebrities and athletes use social media to promote themselves and items. It is revolutionizing the way people interact with athletes (Corazza, 2009). With this in mind, student athletes are becoming a part of this international connection as social media does not limit itself by profession or age. The purpose of this study was to identify future problematic social media matters towards an individual collegiate student athlete, other student athletes, and the institution in order to recognize ways to prevent them. In order to narrow down this research, this study questioned the attitudes and beliefs of student athletes towards social media. This research is important in order to promote leadership and professionalism as well as ensure that all student athletes are being given the best chance to be successful in the classroom and on the court. As the use of social media and new social networking sites continue to grow, it opens more gates for student athletes to make mistakes. By identifying these problems and educating student athletes, it is theorized that the success rate of current athletes will be more prosperous in their futures and become a stronger asset to their institution. The following are the research questions and were asked to help assess these areas.

RQ: What are the attitudes and beliefs of student athletes towards Social Media?

H1: It was hypothesized that student athletes are aware of the image they are presenting on social media and are okay with others viewing their profiles.

H2: It was hypothesized that 70% of student athletes have had a comment, picture, or link on their social media profile that included, inappropriate profanity, pictures including alcohol or are sexually revealing, comments regarding alcohol or drugs, and/or bullying.

H3: It was hypothesized that student athletes are not aware of the negative impacts social media can have on the individual user and the institution they represent.

H4: It was hypothesized that student athletes are not being educated on Social Media and the negative impacts it can have on the individual user and the institution they represent.

RQ2: Do social media profiles of a student athlete differ from those of the non-athlete student body?

H1: It was hypothesized that 70% of the social media profiles of a student athlete and the non-athlete student body include the same content.

Participants

This research was gathered from 86 student athletes and an additional 85 non-athletes from the general student body from a small southern Division I university. The participant's ages range from 18-23 both female and male. The education level is undergraduate and graduate students. All students completed the survey on a voluntary basis. It was possible that the student athletes that complete the survey may be a varsity athlete in one of the following sports, soccer, tennis, golf, softball, baseball, basketball, volleyball, cross country, and track & field. As there was two different survey groups, participants were separated based on whether or not they are a student athlete on campus.

Research Design

This study was conducted using two surveys formatted from “A Survey on Social Networking Sites” created by Peluchette and Karl (2008). Both surveys included four of the surveys original sections: participant demographic information, social network usage, internet use, and other’s use of your personal profile. They act as the base for the survey, however as this study focuses primarily on student athletes, the second survey included an additional section titled, ‘student athletes and social media.’ The survey created by Peluchetter and Karl (2008) was used to identify student athlete’s attitudes towards social media, they found this survey was useful and learned that students are somewhat naive about the potential negative consequences. Overall, they identified that their reliability coefficients in all aspects ranged from 0.70 - 0.87. This verified that the questions being asked in their survey are in fact reliable. Therefore, by adding the additional heading this research created an outcome that was narrowed down in order to identify more specific results.

The additional section of the survey included questions that specifically speak to the student athletes and their understanding of their university and teams social media policies. Using Sanderson’s (2011) study, these questions were formatted based on his research that identified that many universities athletic department social media policies were created based on restrictions and not instructions. Secondly, the research also promotes a “don’t get caught” attitude, therefore not properly preparing student athletes. Sanderson (2011) suggests that student athletes need significant training regarding social media. These questions were created to better identify the student athlete’s behaviors and attitudes towards social media and help identify possible training based on their current

knowledge of the subject. This survey was used in a pilot group of 20 student athletes in order to validate its use.

The survey was voluntary and conducted at a mid-major Division I University. Limitations regarding the survey regard the lack of football, a college sport with significant viewership and fanship. Secondly, this study solely relied on the information provided by the students and limits itself from administrators, coaches, and outside professionals.

Procedures

The research for this study was collected in the fall of 2014 and conducted over a one-month period. The survey was completed using SurveyMonkey, an online data collection service. The data was organized based on the sections of the survey and in the two groups, student athlete and general student body. The data was recorded and organized using the data collection system included in SurveyMonkey. The data did not require names or contact information; therefore it was stored on a personal computer with no names or contact information that might connect a participant to the study. The raw data is privileged solely to the author and members of the chair overlooking the study. When the final results were concluded, they were shared with the University and raw data will be destroyed three years later.

Chapter 4

Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify and understand student athlete's attitudes and beliefs towards social media. This information can provide education to athletes on the negative outcomes of social media use. The data were collected through an online survey of four sections with 26 questions. Participants included 171 students, 85 of them student athletes and the remaining 86 were non-athletes between the ages 18 and 23, 63.5% of athletes were female and 36.5% were male. The majority of participants (86.5%) had been using social media sites for over three years and most of them log in to at least one social media site more than three times a day (58.8%). Participants ranked Instagram as most important (58.8%), Twitter second (40%), Facebook third (45.9%), and an overwhelming large group (81.2%) voted LinkedIn as the least important or used social media.

It was discovered that the vast majority (94%) of student athletes use social media for entertainment purposes. Other ways student athletes use social media included to pass time, communicate, and to find information. Fanship (following celebrities) and the need to fit in were used by less than 25% of athletes.

Research Question 1

What are the attitudes and beliefs of student athletes towards Social Media?

Hypothesis 1. It was hypothesized that student athletes are aware of the image they are presenting on social media and are okay with others viewing their profiles. To help test the hypothesis student athletes were asked to identify characteristics they

believed were projected within their profile. The following was discovered based on a Likert scale from 1-5 (1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree). The most controversial characteristics were “sexy,” “bold,” and “risk taker”, student athletes neither agreed nor disagreed with these images. For example, “sexy” had a large portion of participants neither agree nor disagree (43.5%), and smaller groups to moderately agree (24.7%) or strongly disagreed (17.6%). Additional characteristics showed more definitive numbers. For example, more student athletes believed they presented a “popular” image (34.1%). Additionally, they did not think they projected an “outrageous” image (55.3% moderately or strongly disagree). “Likable” (85.9%), “friendly” (88.2%), “fun” (83.5%), “humorous” (72.9%), “good natured” (85.9), “intelligent” (61.2%), “conscientious” (54.2%), “reliable” (64.7%), “high academic” (56.4%), “hard working” (74.1%), “facially attractive” (54.1%), and “trustworthy” (62.3%) were all characteristics that the large majority moderately or strongly agreed to as a characteristics they do present on their social media profiles. Presenting an “athletic” image was a characteristic that was important to the student-athletes (49.4%). On the contrary, the majority believed they did not project an image of being “emotionally unstable” (80%), “arrogant” (80%), “irresponsible” (83.5%), “offensive” (77.6%) or “immature” (82.4%). Strong correlations were present between some characteristics and demographics.

When student athletes were asked whom they would be okay viewing and sharing their social media profile with, the majority of athletes chose friends (88.3%), family (77.6%), classmates (83.5%), and employers (77.7%), however, they moderately to strongly disagreed (55.3%) with being okay to share their profile with strangers. Similarly, a few student athletes (30.6%) believed that it is very unlikely that people other

than close friends would view their profile. Furthermore, student athletes agreed to share all content with universities officials and staff as well as employers except the following: sexy self-photo (92.9%), semi-nude photo (96.5%), nude photo (96.5%), photo with firearms (89.4%), self-photo with alcohol (94.1%), photo with romantic partner (58.8%), comments regarding sexual behavior (95.3%), comments regarding alcohol (95.3%), comments with profanity (94.1%), and comments referring to university violation (95.3%).

Hypothesis 2. It was hypothesized that 70% of student athletes have had a comment, picture, or link on their social media profile that included inappropriate profanity, pictures including alcohol or are sexually revealing, comments regarding alcohol or drugs, and/or bullying. Of the content student athletes admitted to including in the profiles the following was discovered: 9.4% had sexually provocative photos, 2.4% had semi-nude photos, 1.2% include nude photos, 1.2% include comments of sexual behavior, 1.2% include comments/pictures that are in university violation, 3.7% include photos of alcohol, 4.7% include comments of alcohol, 4.7% mention drugs, and 5.9% admit to making racist or bullying comments.

Hypothesis 3. It was hypothesized that student athletes are not aware of the negative impacts social media can have on the individual user and the institution they represent. Over half of the student athletes say their specific team has its own social media policy (54.1%), while others either believe their team does not have a social media policy (23.5%) or are not really sure (22.4%). Of the student athletes who were aware of a team social media policy, 88.5% said they followed the policy and 9.8% said they sometimes follow it. When asked if anyone on their team had ever been penalized for

breaking this policy because of something they may have posted on their social media profiles 27.1% said yes, 41.2% said no, and the remaining 31.8% did not know. They were then asked if they knew any athletes from different teams who were penalized for social media violations, similarly, 24.7% said yes, 44.7% said no, and the remaining 30.6% were unsure. The participants that admitted to knowing someone affected negatively by something on their social media profiles left comments regarding the nature of the post. The two attributes that covered the majority of reasons these student athletes got into trouble were alcohol in pictures or comments (45.5%) and inappropriate comments and/or pictures (43.2%) often described as a poor representation of the team or school.

Hypothesis 4. It was hypothesized that student athletes are not being educated on Social Media and the negative impacts it can have on the individual user and the institution they represent. In the final survey section, 60% of student athletes believe that the athletic department has its own social media policy while others were not sure (32.9%). The school does not have a social media policy in place. When asked specifically of the schools social media education, 45.9% believed the university is educating its student athletes well in the area of social media, while 36.5% do not.

Research Question 2

Do social media profiles of a student athlete differ from those of the general student body?

Hypothesis 1. It was hypothesized that 70% of the social media profiles of a student athlete and the non-athlete student body include the same content. Student athletes and non-athletes shared many similarities between the content do or do not

include in their social media policies. The content they were both unlikely to share included: their emails (SA 65.5% and NA 59.3%), phone numbers (SA 78.8% and NA 70.9%) or home address (SA 96.5% and NA 94.2%). However, the majority of both student athletes and non-athletes agree to share the following information: their school (SA 81.2% and NA 86%), their birthday (SA 69.4% and NA 89.5%), sexual orientation (SA 60% and NA 67.4%), relationship status (SA 51.8% and NA 68.6%), interests and hobbies (SA 81.2% and NA 79.1%), and group affiliations (SA 62.4% and NA 70.9%).

Of the photos they share on their profiles the following is a list they are both likely to share: traditional self-photos (SA 77.9% and NA 84.9%), humorous photos (SA 74.1% and NA 73.3%), athletic photos (SA 85.9% and NA 50%), photos with their romantic partner (SA 48.2% and NA 61.6%), photos with friends (SA 90.6% and NA 93%) and with family (SA 89.4% and NA 89.5%). However, the majority of student athletes and non-athletes do not share sexy photos (SA 82.4% and NA 82.6%), semi-nude photos (SA 91.8% and NA 93%), nude photos (SA 95.3% and NA 98.8%), photos with firearms (SA 87.1% and NA 88.4%), and photos drinking alcohol (SA 89.4% and NA 91.9%).

When asked about the comments participants share on their profiles the majority does not share the following: comments regarding sexual behavior (SA 91.8% and NA 96.5%), drugs (SA 94.1% and NA 94.2%), and comments regarding bullying or racial slurs (SA 91.8% and NA 91.9%). The preponderance of participants (SA 90.6% and NA 94.2%) say they do not post anything in violation with University policy or share anything they do not want their current or future employer to see (SA 97.6% and NA 90.7%). Although the vast majority of student athletes and non-athletes shared similar content, a few significant differences were present when a Man Whitney *U*-test was applied. The differences were

in birthdays ($p=.03$), sexual orientation ($p=.019$), religious beliefs ($p=.004$), athletic photos ($p=.000$), and comments regarding personal beliefs and values ($p=.013$). Of the 24 characteristics, only five had significant differences. The remaining characteristics showed similar responses between student athletes and non-athletes.

Table 1

Man Whitney U-test for Content Shared

<i>Content</i>	<i>Man-Whitney U</i>	<i>p</i>
Email	3249.500	.303
Home Address	3488.000	.666
Phone Number	3325.500	.236
School	3477.000	.644
Birthday	3197.000	.030
Sexual Orientation	3978.500	.019*
Relationship Status	3345.500	.266
Interests	3572.500	.856
Group Affiliations	3221.00	.181
Religious Beliefs	2809.500	.004*
Self-Photo Traditional	3524.500	.794
Self-Photo Humorous	3539.500	.642
Self-Photo Sexy	3558.500	.797
Self-Photo Athletic	2321.000	.000*
Self-Photo Semi-Nude	3439.000	.491
Self Photo Nude	3442.500	.080
Self-Photo Firearms	3437.000	.765
Self-Photo Alcohol	3392.500	.700
Self-Photo Romantic Partner	3343.500	.277
Photo of Friends	3574.000	.599
Photo of Family	3495.500	.354
Comments regarding sexual behavior	3476.000	.174
Comments regarding alcohol	3393.500	.202
Comments regarding drugs	3582.000	.810
Comments regarding university violations	3516.500	.502
Comments regarding personal beliefs & values	2868.000	.013*
Comments regarding racism or bullying	3498.500	.830
Anything you do not want prospective or current employers to see	3403.000	.055

* if $p < .05$, ** if $p < .01$, * if $p < .001$

Table 2

Athlete Frequencies for Characteristics

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Moderately Disagree</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Moderately Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
Sexy	17.6%	9.4%	43.5%	24.7%	4.7%
Popular	9.4%	10.6%	40%	34.1%	4.7%
Outrageous	27.1%	28.2%	32.9%	8.2%	3.5%
Bold	15.3%	17.6%	40%	25.9%	1.2%
Risk Taker	18.8%	21.2%	36.5%	20%	1.2%
Partier	29.4%	25.9%	34.1%	10.6%	0.0%
Likable	1.2%	1.2%	9.4%	58.8%	27.1%
Friendly	0.0%	3.5%	7.1%	57.6%	30.6%
Fun	1.2%	1.2%	14.1%	55.3%	28.2%
Humorous	2.4%	4.7%	20%	51.8%	21.2%
Good Natured	0.0%	1.2%	11.8%	62.4%	23.5%
Reliable	1.2%	4.7%	28.2%	44.7%	20%
High Academic Ability	0.0%	5.9%	36.5%	37.6%	18.8%
Hard Working	1.2%	5.9%	18.8%	48.2%	25.9%
Trustworthy	2.4%	2.4%	31.8%	43.5%	18.8%
Conscientious	4.7%	3.5%	37.6%	42.4%	11.8%
Facially Attractive	4.7%	3.5%	23.5%	54.1%	14.1%
Emotionally Unstable	56.5%	23.5%	15.3%	4.7	0.0%
Arrogant	47.1%	32.9%	12.9%	7.1%	0.0%
Irresponsible	50.6%	32.9%	14.1%	2.4%	0.0%
Immature	47.1%	35.3%	10.6%	5.9%	1.2%
Intelligent	2.4%	3.5%	31.8%	49.4%	11.8%
Offensive	49.4%	28.2%	18.8%	3.5%	0.0%
Athletic	0.0%	2.4%	5.9%	29.4%	62.4%

Note. “Moderately” and “Strongly” were categorized as Agree or Disagree.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify student athlete attitudes and beliefs towards social media. The goal of the research was to address the lack of education schools are providing for student athletes in order to prepare for future problematic social media matters. In this process a number of concerns presented themselves through a series of statistics. First and foremost, it is important to identify that of the 171 students used for this survey, 85 were student athletes. Previous research had identified 50% of their participants log onto their social media profiles daily (Peluchette & Karl, 2008) where this study showed 58.8% log in at least 3 times a day and over 86.5% have been using it for over 3 years.

Previous research by Gangadharbatla (2007) showed that the need to fit in and willingness to join social media had a positive correlation. This research depicts entertainment and communication as the main reason for social media and found the need to fit in as one of the least important reasons for social media use. . This may be in result to the increasingly large number of social media options and its rising popularity. Due to its worth as a communication tool and entertainment, it may be assumed that the majority of users find it a necessity because of its popularity and common use amongst people. Users may find it less of a social pressure to fit in and more of a need and/or resource to communicate and interact with people today; becoming more of a norm than a trend.

When comparing student athletes and non-athletes it was expected that the majority (70%) of participant attitudes towards social media would correlate. Using the Mann Whitney U test there were very few significant differences, therefore the

hypothesis was supported. Similar results were reported on the comments, pictures, information, and characteristics participants share and make public through their social media profiles. This reaction was predicted based on the research of Peluchette and Karl (2010) that pointed out collegiate student's project a particular image to fit in. With this knowledge and understanding that about 80% of college students log into Facebook at least once a day (Kittinger, Correia, & Irons 2010), it was assumed that this need creates a college norm for all of the student body, including athletes and non-athletes. This study also supported previous research through the characteristics athletes admit to presenting on their social media profile Peluchette and Karl's (2010). The consistency of responses suggests that it is likely collegiate students (both athletes and non-athletes) are attempting to create or present a "positive" image, one that is fun, friendly, and popular. The positive images were all characteristics participants believed they portrayed on their profiles, such as: popular, likeable, friendly, fun, humorous, good-natured, reliable, high academic, hardworking, trustworthy, conscientious, facially attractive, intelligent, and athletic (positive characteristic for athletes). Characteristics that portrayed a "negative" image were not reported as present on the profile of the vast majority of participants. Negative characteristics included: outrageous, risk taker, partier, emotionally unstable, arrogant, irresponsible, immature, and offensive.

Similarly, student athletes and non-athletes share common beliefs regarding what profile information they share and with whom they choose to share it. The survey also demonstrated the notion that student athletes are not well educated on the negative effects or impact social media can have on themselves, their team, and/or university. Of the 85 student athlete participants, 27.1% knew someone on their team penalized for a social

media violation and 24.7% knew someone from a different team that was penalized.

Therefore, only a fourth of participants had an experience with the negative effects of social media. Of all the student athletes surveyed, 60% believe there is a university athletic department social media policy and 32.9% are not sure if such a policy exists. In reality, there is no policy within the student athlete handbook, nor does the athletic department enforce any such policy ("Student Athlete Handbook," n.d.). Therefore, only 7.1% of student athletes have an accurate understanding of the non-policy.

Those 45.9% who said they believe they are being well educated say that social media is covered in an annual meeting where they are reminded to represent themselves and the school "well." Some student athletes mention that the annual reminders are "trying to convince athletes that they are not normal students and they represent" the school everyday or that because they are athletes they are in the spotlight. Another athlete made note that although the athletic department talks about social media, "student athletes do not take it seriously. [However,] if they educated [them], and showed examples with the punishment it might help." There is also a group of student athletes that mention the athletic department should not have to educate their athletes because the uses of social media should be common sense. The student athlete responses provide insight to their understanding of the rules and reminders provided by the athletic department. However, these results show that student athletes are not being educated on the impacts instead; they are simply reminders on how to act.

The NCAA leaves social media policies and monitoring up to each institution. In this case, there is no policy; instead there are reminders of how student athletes should represent themselves once a year at annual meetings. This research supported previous

findings on athletic departments and their social media policy (Sanderson, 2011). His study revealed that the majority of social media policies focused more on the “do not get caught” mentality and had contradictory verbiage (Sanderson, 2011, p. 507). Although the university provides a quick reminder of social media representation within an annual meeting covering a wide range of topics, the verbiage provided and lack of communication leads these students to believing that there is in fact a social media policy. This is likely to be occurring because of the NCAA and universities lack of agreement.

Furthermore, when asked if the athletic department should enforce a social media ban an overwhelming number of student athlete participants said no (75.3%) leaving few to answer yes (10.6%), and another group unsure (14.1%). Those who said there should not be an athlete ban on social media left comments explaining their reasoning. One student mentioned that, “social media has become mainstream and part of everyday life to many college students.” Others mention that the university should trust that they would act responsibly and make the right decisions. Few students mentioned their first amendment right; one student athlete in particular stated that social media “really doesn’t have much effect at all on athletics, let alone a negative one.” This provides relevant information that many athletes lack the understanding and experience of negative social media implications. However, among those against the ban or unsure mentioned athletic departments need for boundaries, monitoring, or appropriate presentation on social media. Essentially, something concrete (such as a written or signed policy) for athletes to read and understand would be beneficial. In comparison to previous research, there were little examples of student athletes who had been directly or extremely affected by social

media. Topics such as the ripple effect (Schrotenboer 2006), team cancer (McGannon, Hoffmann, Metz, & Schinke, 2012, p. 26), comments from fans (Browning & Sanderson 2012), and/or athletes who suffered the consequences did not seem to be a concern of the student athletes used in this research. Due to the lack of negative experiences presented, these student athletes may be limited or under- prepared for the possibility of potential risks.

Additionally, student athletes presented the idea that social media behavior is common sense. Unfortunately, this is another example of the naivety of student athletes and social media as they expect all athletes to share the same common sense when in reality it cannot be assumed. Many student athletes have been punished publicly for their social media uses as recent as last week. A student athlete at Bloomsburg University, a division II School in Pennsylvania, was dismissed for making the derogatory comment, “Disney is making a movie about Mo’ne Davis? WHAT A JOKE. That slut got rocked by Nevada” (Grautiski 2015). At UMBC, another 5 female lacrosse players were suspended indefinitely for violent messages in a newer social media hub called Group Me (Renbaum 2015). A week later their head coach was also dismissed based on these events. This study provides enough information to prove the need for student athlete, university, and NCAA preparedness. Creating a social media education plan for student athletes is the next step.

Future Research

This study was conducted in order to discover the beliefs and attitudes of student athletes towards social media. Prior to research it was assumed that survey size, sport teams (football specifically), and participant numbers would limit the research. However,

there were additional areas of the research that served as limitations. Firstly, although there was a consistency in answers by both the student athletes and non-athletes, it would be beneficial to have the opportunity to study the profiles of these athletes and to create an assessment based on the characteristics they portray to someone else. For example, the majority of participants selected an image through the given characteristics that portray a “positive” image (fun, friendly, funny, etc.) while very few chose characteristics that presented a “negative” image (arrogant, irresponsible, sexy, etc.). Due to the correlations, it is likely that participants are being honest. However, understanding the perceptions of these student athletes is important to further understand their attitudes and beliefs towards social media. Specifically, understanding student athletes’ perceptions of appropriateness, which was a term used by the student athletes and by the athletic department in their pre-season meetings. Interestingly, there is a very large age and generation gap between the student athletes and those administering the social media warnings that could lead to assumptions and misunderstandings. Examining and comparing student athlete profiles with their perceptions would likely provide accurate feedback to better educate student athletes. More demographic research may also be important, specifically, addressing age and gender. Very few characteristics showed correlation between male, female, and age. Additionally, sample size may need to be bigger in order to find significant correlations or differences.

As mentioned, the level of appropriateness is to understanding the beliefs and attitudes of student athletes. Therefore, understanding younger generations will help to better prepare and educate. Expanding this research to the High School and Middle school level students is another way to benefit from this study. Pre-collegiate education is

an area that can help to prepare student athletes better for the change and challenges to come ahead. Being able to address the problem at its root is essential to eliminating the problem more effectively.

Another area of limitation is the lack of understanding, boundaries, and consistency provided by each university and institution. This research made clear the lack of communication between student athletes and administration. Learning more about the administration side and opinions may help to create a better connection from student athlete to administration. Additional information for the NCAA regarding the boundaries they expect may also aid in future legal matters that are likely to begin occurring. Unfortunately, the lack of legal implications makes it difficult for many organizations to make a clear decision.

Conclusion

The results of this study showed student athletes believe they portray a positive image on social media, however, lack the knowledge of student athlete social media policies and the negative effects it can have on their individual career and institution. Due to the lack of experience and constant growth of social media capabilities and legal cases, it makes it difficult to educate in an area where very few experts exist., Further research can help to create an understanding of the perceptions of athletes to create an education system that would help discover a more positive image with social media use. The advantage to this research does help to identify that education in athletic departments is essential to making social media policies clear, identify and define appropriateness, and to create boundaries.

Appendices

IRB Form

Revised 11/06/2013

IRB #
TO BE COMPLETED BY SPAR

Winthrop University

REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS Institutional Review Board

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Always secure the most recent version of this form from the website. Failure to use the most recent version could result in the protocol being returned to you.
2. The form may be completed on-line and then printed out in order to obtain necessary signatures.
3. Ensure that all items are completed on the Request for Review form
4. You must attach to the Request for Review form all related materials such as:
 - ☒ Informed Consent, Parental Permission and/or Subject Assent forms
 - ☐ Copies of recruitment materials, including emails, flyers, letters, etc
 - ☒ Copies of surveys to be used in the study
 - ☒ Copies of interview questions to be used in the study
 - ☐ Debriefing Form
 - ☐ Copies of all other materials to be used in the study, such as pictures, videos, website URL's, etc

SUBMISSION

You may submit this Request for Review either electronically or in paper copy form, but you do not have to submit both electronically and on paper.

1. Electronic Submission – You will need to print out the form in order to obtain all appropriate signatures. Then prepare an electronic file, combining a scanned copy of the Signed Request for Review and all related materials into one .pdf file. Arrange this file in the order shown in the check list above. Do not include this instruction page in your .pdf file. **Electronic files not arranged in accordance with the check list above will be returned to you for correction.** Send the electronic copy to Teresa Justice, Director of SPAR at justicet@winthrop.edu

OR

2. Paper Copy – Submit a paper copy of the Signed Request for Review form and attachments to the SPAR Office at Rm 142 or Rm. 149 McLaurin Bldg

Revised 07/05/2013

Page 1 of 6

 IRB #
 TO BE COMPLETED BY SPAR

Winthrop University

REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS Institutional Review Board

RESEARCHER of RECORD: Emily Boissonneault COLLEGE/DEPARTMENT: Sports & Fitness Admin. PHONE NUMBER: HOME: WORK: EMAIL: boissonneaulte2@winthrop.edu CELL PHONE: 313-694-1962 ADDRESS: 411 Burnage Way Apt. 205, Rock Hill SC 29730 STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty or Staff (If a student, complete faculty advisor section) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graduate Student <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate Student	CO-RESEARCHERS: Dr. Janet R. Wojcik Dr. Joni Marr FACULTY ADVISOR: Dr. Christi DeWaele ADVISOR PHONE: HOME: WORK: 803-323-3376 EMAIL: CELL PHONE: ADDRESS: Winthrop Univ., 218A West Center, Rock Hill
TITLE OF RESEARCH: The Attitudes and Beliefs of Student Athletes Towards Social Media	
DATES OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Approval Requested for Start Date: 5/1/2014 (The requested start date should be at least 2 weeks after the next scheduled meeting of the IRB) End Date: 5/1/2015 (Maximum of one year; must be renewed annually)	
IS THIS RESEARCH BEING FUNDED BY RESEARCH GRANT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES; Sponsor: <input type="checkbox"/> Funding Applied for; Sponsor: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
1.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Is this activity being carried out by student as a classroom assignment to be reviewed by the faculty member. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Will the information gathered or developed in this activity be used in a presentation or publication outside of the classroom? If you checked yes to both questions above, please explain how the information will be used outside of the classroom: The information may be used to conduct social media education and/or presented at a seminar.
2.	INDICATE THE TYPES OF MEMBERS OF THE RESEARCH TEAM WHO WILL HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH HUMAN SUBJECTS: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FACULTY MEMBER <input type="checkbox"/> STAFF MEMBER <input type="checkbox"/> UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GRADUATE STUDENT

	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER; SPECIFY:																								
3.	<p>A. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH IN NON-TECHNICAL LANGUAGE: The purpose of this research is to identify the attitudes and beliefs that student athletes have towards social media. This is important in order to better educate and prepare student athletes for possible misuses that may lead to expulsion or exclusion from school or their team.</p> <p>B. DESCRIBE RESEARCH PROTOCOL OR METHODOLOGY TO BE USED: The information will be gathered through a survey.</p>																								
4.	EXPLAIN BRIEFLY BUT COMPLETELY WHAT TASKS OR ACTIVITIES THE SUBJECTS IN THIS RESEARCH WILL BE DOING (If a survey/questionnaire is to be used, state how many questions will be asked and the expected time to complete the survey): The subjects will be asked to complete an anonymous 4 (general student body) or 5 (student athletes) section survey that will regard social media uses and experiences.																								
5.	<p>DESCRIBE SUBJECTS FOR THIS RESEARCH, INCLUDING A STATEMENT OF WHO WILL BE RECRUITED AND THE ANTICIPATED POPULATION SIZE: Two different groups will be used in the research. The first group will be the general student body, approximately 100 students would be ideal. The second group will be Division I athletes at the same university, 150 subjects will be ideal for this group. Both groups will be male/female , ages 18-25. Of the athletes from Winthrop University, the women's lacrosse team will not be recruited due to a conflict of interest between the researcher and subjects.</p> <p>DO YOUR SUBJECTS INCLUDE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Infants and children younger than 7 years?</td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Institutionalized mentally impaired people?</td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Students enrolled in your own classes?</td></tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Students enrolled at Winthrop University?</td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Prisoners?</td></tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Other special populations? Specify - Athletes</td></tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Infants and children younger than 7 years?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Institutionalized mentally impaired people?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Students enrolled in your own classes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Students enrolled at Winthrop University?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Prisoners?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Other special populations? Specify - Athletes						
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Other special populations? Specify - Athletes																							
6.	DESCRIBE HOW SUBJECTS WILL BE RECRUITED FOR THIS RESEARCH: The subjects will be recruited through emails and in person through classes and meetings.																								
7.	HOW WILL YOU ASSURE THAT PARTICIPATION OF THE SUBJECTS IS VOLUNTARY? The emails will state that they are "voluntary."																								
8a.	<p>CAN THE HUMAN SUBJECT BE DIRECTLY IDENTIFIED BY: <i>(For any responses of "yes" indicate in the space provided how the subject's privacy will be protected.)</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Name on Response form;</td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Photograph;</td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Television/VCR/DVD tapes;</td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Audiotape;</td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Coded Research Forms;</td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Detailed Biographical Data;</td></tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Informed Consent, Assent or Parental Permission forms: A consent form will be required.</td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</td><td>Other:</td></tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Name on Response form;	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Photograph;	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Television/VCR/DVD tapes;	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Audiotape;	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Coded Research Forms;	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Detailed Biographical Data;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Informed Consent, Assent or Parental Permission forms: A consent form will be required.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Other:
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<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Other:																							

Revised 07/05/2013

Page 3 of 6

8b.	If you checked yes to any item in 8a; then: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Will personally identifiable data be shared with others outside of this research team? If you checked yes, please explain.
9.	<p>THE RESEARCHER SHALL MAKE EVERY POSSIBLE ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE RESEARCH AND THE HUMAN SUBJECTS. IF FOR SOME REASON, THE RESPONSES, INFORMATION, OR OBSERVATIONS OF THE SUBJECT BECAME KNOWN TO PERSONS OTHER THAN THE RESEARCHERS, COULD THIS INFORMATION POTENTIALLY PLACE THE SUBJECT AT RISK OF:</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No DAMAGE TO HIS/HER FINANCIAL STANDING? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No DAMAGE TO HIS/HER PRESENT OR FUTURE EMPLOYABILITY? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No CRIMINAL OR CIVIL LIABILITY? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No PSYCHOLOGICAL/EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS? </p> <p>EXPLAIN ANY "YES" ANSWERS AND STEPS THAT HAVE BEEN TAKE TO MINIMIZE RISK: Only presents a risk if confidentiality is breached. The participants will remain anonymous</p>
10.	<p>ARE ANY OF THE TECHNIQUES LISTED BELOW INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No INVASIVE MEDICAL PROCEDURES? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No NON-INVASIVE MEDICAL PROCEDURES? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No STRENUOUS EXERCISE? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No OTHER PHYSICAL TESTING </p> <p>EXPLAIN ANY "YES" ANSWERS AND STEPS THAT HAVE BEEN TAKE TO MINIMIZE RISK:</p>
11a	<p>DESCRIBE HOW LEGALLY EFFECTIVE INFORMED CONSENT WILL BE OBTAINED AND ATTACH A COPY OF THE CONSENT FORM. IF MINORS ARE TO BE USED AS RESEARCH SUBJECTS, DESCRIBE PROCEDURES USED TO GAIN CONSENT OF THEIR PARENT(S), GUARDIAN(S), OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE(S). The survey will include a preliminary statement that will cover and ask for informed consent before the subject may proceed to the survey. It will be necessary for subjects to accept or decline before they proceed. Secondly, permission from the Athletic Department at Winthrop University will be necessary in order to target the student athletes.</p>
11b	<p>WAIVER OF SIGNED INFORMED CONSENT REQUIREMENT</p> <p>TO REQUEST A WAIVER OF A SIGNED INFORMED CONSENT, COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> The only record linking the subject and the research would be the consent document, and the principal risk will be potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality. Each subject will be asked whether the subject wants documentation linking the subject with the research, and the subject's wishes will govern. Section 46.117(c)1 <input type="checkbox"/> The research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to the subjects, and involves no procedures, for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context. Section 46.117(c)2 <input type="checkbox"/> The research or demonstration project is to be conducted by or subject to the approval of state or local government officials and is designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine (i)public benefit or service programs; (ii)procedures for obtaining benefits or services under these programs; (iii)possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv)possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs; and the research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration. Section 46.116(c) <input type="checkbox"/> The research involves no more than minimal risk to the subjects, the waiver will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects, the research could not </p>

Revised 07/05/2013

Page 4 of 6

	<p>practicably be carried out without the waiver, and whenever appropriate, the subjects will be provided with additional pertinent information after participation. Section 46.116(d)</p> <p>In cases where the documentation requirement is waived, the IRB may require the investigator to provide subjects with a written statement regarding the research.</p>	
12.	<p>STORAGE AND DISPOSAL OF DATA AND OTHER RESEARCH MATERIALS:</p> <p>A. How and where will the data and other research material be stored until no longer needed? The information will be held in a private and personal computer that will not be shared outside the research team.</p> <p>B. When will the disposal of data and research materials take place? 3 years</p> <p><i>At a minimum, investigators must maintain research records for at least three (3) years after completion of the research. All records must be accessible for inspection and copying by authorized representatives of the IRB, any federal department or agency supporting the research, and sponsor, if any. (Source: 45CFR46.115) If the Principal Investigator is a student, then the faculty advisor will be responsible for the record retention. If you are a member of a professional association or society, you may be required by their practices to keep records longer than 3 years.</i></p> <p>C. How will data and research materials be disposed ? Computer files will be deleted and hard copies will be shredded.</p>	
13.	<p>INDICATE ON THE CHECK LIST BELOW, ANY DOCUMENTS THAT APPLY TO YOUR RESEARCH AND ATTACH TO THIS PROTOCOL A COPY OF THE APPLICABLE DOCUMENT.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND/OR INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> PARENTAL OR GUARDIAN PERMISSION FOR A MINOR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY (AGES 7-14 YEARS)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY (AGES 15 - 17 YEARS)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COPIES OF ANY OTHER MAIL TO BE DELIVERED TO RESPONDENTS OR SUBJECTS (E.G. COVER LETTERS, SCRIPTS OF VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS, ETC.)</p>	
14.	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>DO YOU CONSIDER THIS RESEARCH EXEMPT FROM REVIEW BY THE HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE? IF YES, Please check the reason for exemption from the list below:</p>
a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (a) research on regular and special education instructional strategies; or (b) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods [45CFR46(b)(1)]</p>
b.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement) survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability or reputation. [45CFR46(b)(2)]</p> <p>Research involving children (subjects that have not attained the age of 18 years) is not exempt under this category unless the research involves only the observation of public behavior and the researchers do not participate or impact the activities being observed. [45CFR46.401(b)]</p>
c.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior if (a) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or (b) federal statute(s) without exemption that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter. [45CFR46(b)(3)]</p>
d.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Research involving the collection study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. [45CFR46(b)(4)]</p>

Revised 07/05/2013

Page 5 of 6

e.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of a Federal department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine; (a) public benefit or service programs of Federal programs; (b) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those Federal programs; (c) possible changes in methods or alternatives to those Federal programs or procedures; or (d) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those Federal programs. [45CFR46(b)(5)]
f.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (a) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed; or (b) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. [45CFR46(b)(6)]

Certifications

By my signature below, I certify that each of the named co-researchers has accepted his/her role in this study. I agree to not begin any research activity on this study until written approval by the IRB has been received. I agree to a continuing exchange of information with the Institutional Review Board (IRB). I agree to obtain IRB approval before making any changes or additions to the project. I will provide progress reports at least annually, or as requested. I agree to report promptly to the IRB all unanticipated problems or serious adverse events involving risk to human subjects. A copy of the informed consent will be given to each subject and the signed original will be retained in my files, unless a waiver of a signed informed consent has been granted.

I further certify that I have successfully completed the following Human Subjects Training Course:

- ☐ CITI – Biomedical Research Investigator
☒ CITI – Social and Behavioral Research Investigator
☐ CITI – Undergraduate Researcher
☐ CITI – IRB Member

Signature of Researcher

Date

By my signature below, I certify that I have reviewed this research study and agree to counsel the student researcher in all aspects of the research study.

I further certify that I have successfully completed the following Human Subjects Training Course:

- ☐ CITI – Biomedical Research Investigator
☒ CITI – Social and Behavioral Research Investigator
☐ CITI – IRB Member

If Student Researcher, Signature of Faculty Advisor

Date

Approval by Department Chair of Researcher of Record

(Dean, if Chair is the Researcher or if Chair is otherwise unable to review.)

I have reviewed this research study. I believe the research is sound, that the study design and methods are adequate to achieve the study goals, and that there are appropriate resources (financial and otherwise) available to the researcher. I support the study, and hereby submit it for further review by the IRB.

Signature of Department Head or Dean

Date

Note: Do not use personal home addresses and phone numbers on Informed Consent, Assent, Parental Permission or Debriefing statements.

Informed Consent Agreement

Winthrop University

Informed Consent Agreement

Researcher: Emily Boissonneault

☒ Graduate Student ☐ Undergraduate

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Christi DeWaele Faculty Advisor's Position: Sport Management Program Coordinator

Title of Study: The Attitudes and Beliefs of Student Athletes Towards Social Media

You are invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to be a part of this study, you need to understand the risks and benefits. This consent form provides information about the research study. I will be available to answer your questions and provide further explanations. If you take part in this research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form. Your decision to take part in this study is voluntary. You are free to choose whether or not you will take part in the study. If you should decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time.

Purpose of the research study:

The purpose of this research is to identify the attitudes and beliefs that student athletes have towards social media. This is important in order to better educate and prepare student athletes for possible misuses that may lead to expulsion or exclusion from school or their team.

Procedures or methods to be used in the study:

You will be asked to complete a 4 (general student body) or 5 (student athletes) section survey that will regard social media uses and experiences. The general student body surveys will be used in order to discover possible differences in attitudes and beliefs towards social media from the student athletes. If you are a student athlete, your surveys will be the same survey with an additional section in order to learn more regarding specific experiences. The information will be gathered and an analysis will be complete based on your responses.

Possible Risks/Benefits Associated with Participating in Study:

Possible benefits include, understanding and discovering ways to use social media to the advantage of a student athlete and create a social media education to help prevent problematic situations. Due to this being an online survey, the IP address will be trackable to the computer used however, it will not be used.

Possible Costs/Compensation Associated with Participating in Study

N/A

Number of questions in the survey/questionnaire and anticipated time to complete the survey/questionnaire: There are approximately 35 questions that should take about 15 minutes.

Right to withdraw from the study:

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time as well as pass any question it needed without penalty.

Privacy of records or other data collected in the study:

N/A

Questions – contact information:

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact me using my Winthrop email account: boissonneaulte2@winthrop.edu

Or through my faculty advisor:

Address: Winthrop Univ., 218A West Center, Rock Hill, SC 29733

Work Phone: 803-323-3376

Email: dewaelec@winthrop.edu

You may also contact:

Teresa Justice, Director

803-323-2460

justicet@winthrop.edu

Sponsored Programs and Research

Winthrop University

Rock Hill, SC 29733

Signatures:

By signing this consent agreement, you agree that you have read this informed consent agreement, you understand what is involved, and you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this consent form.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

IRB Memo



WINTHROP
UNIVERSITY

Sponsored Programs and Research

IRB PROTOCOL #: IRB14097.R1
 TITLE OF PROJECT: The Attitudes and Beliefs of Student Athletes Towards Social Media
 RESEARCHER OF RECORD: Emily Boissonneault
 CO-RESEARCHERS: Janet Wojcik, Ph.D.
 FACULTY ADVISOR: Christi DeWaele, Ph.D.

EXEMPTION DATE: August 13, 2014
 EXEMPTION CATEGORY: 14(b) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior unless (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; or (b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability or reputation. [45CFR46(b)(2)]

Research involving children (subjects who have not attained the age of 18 years) is not exempt unless the research involves only the observation of public behavior and the researchers do not participate or impact the activities being observed. [45CFR46.401(b)]

The Request for Review of Research Involving Human Subjects identified above has been reviewed by the Winthrop University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and has been determined to be exempt from IRB review. You may begin your research on or after the Exemption date show above.

A Request for Modification of Previously Approved or Exempt Protocol must be completed by the researcher and submitted to the IRB for review for any proposed changes or modifications to the protocol. IRB approval must be received prior to amended changes or modifications being implemented by the researcher. These changes may include a change in a survey instrument, the addition or deletion of a research site, a change in personnel, a change in methodology or a change in the Researcher of Record.

Use the form *Adverse Event Report* to report any negative consequences that occur as a result of participation in a research project. . An "adverse event" or "adverse experience" is an undesirable and unintended, though not necessarily unanticipated, injury or physical or emotional consequence to a human subject. "Unanticipated Problems" may or may not include specific events experienced by individual subjects, but are developments within the research activity that suggest a potential for increased risks to subjects or others.

Jean Haubert, Ph.D., Chair
 Winthrop University Institutional Review Board
 803-323-4293
haubertj@winthrop.edu

Copy of Instrument

A Survey on Social Networking Sites

Please answer the questions as truthfully and honest as possible. You have the right to not complete the survey or skip a question without penalty at any time.

SECTION 1: Participant Demographic Information

1. What is your gender? Male Female
2. What is your age? _____
3. What is your major? _____

SECTION 2: Social Networking Usage

1. Do you participate in a social network site (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn)?
 _____ Yes _____ No (if no, skip Section 5)

2. Which of the following social network sites do you participate in? Please rank those that you do participate in, in order of importance, 1 being the most important.
 _____ Facebook
 _____ Twitter
 _____ Instagram
 _____ LinkedIn
 _____ Other (please specify?)_____

3. Why do you use social media? Check all that apply.
 _____ Entertainment
 _____ Information
 _____ Pass-Time
 _____ Fanship
 _____ To keep in contact with others
 _____ Communication
 _____ To fit in/belong

4. How long have you been participating in a social network site?
 _____ less than 6 months
 _____ 6 months to 1 year

- _____ 1 to 2 years
 _____ 2 to 3 years
 _____ over 3 years

5. How often do you log onto your social network site?

- _____ over 3 times per day
 _____ once or twice per day
 _____ two or three times per week
 _____ once a week
 _____ less than once a week

6. Please use the following rating scale to indicate your level of agreement that others will believe that you have the following traits or characteristics after viewing your social network profile.

Characteristics or Traits	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Sexy					
b. Popular					
c. Outrageous					
d. Bold					
e. Risk Taker					
f. "Partier"					
g. Likeable					
h. Friendly					
i. Fun					
j. Humorous					
k. Good-natured					
l. Reliable					
m. High Academic Ability					
n. Hard-working					
o. Trustworthy					
p. Conscientious					
q. Facially Attractive					
r. Emotionally Unstable					
s. Arrogant					
t. Irresponsible					
u. Immature					
v. Intelligent					

w. Offensive					
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7. Please use the following rating scale to indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree/ Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
a. I am OK with friends accessing my social network profile					
b. I am Ok with family accessing my social network profile.					
c. I am Ok with classmates accessing my social network profile.					
d. I am OK with prospective or current employers accessing my social network profile.					
e. I am OK with strangers accessing my social network profile					
f. It is very unlikely that anyone other than my close personal friends will read my social network profile.					

8. In each of the following blanks, please answer which best describes what information you include on your personal profile.

Personal Information	Don't Include	Include	Unsure
a. Email Address			
b. Home Address			
c. Phone Number			
d. Academic Status (School)			
e. Hometown			
f. Birthday			
g. Sexual Orientation			
h. Relationship Status			
i. Interests			
j. Group Affiliations			
k. Political Affiliations			
l. Religious Beliefs			
m. Self-Photo (traditional)			
n. Self-Photo (humorous/goofy)			
o. Self-Photo (sexy/provocative)			
p. Self-Photo (athletic)			

q.	Self-Photo semi-nude			
r.	Self-Photo in the nude			
s.	Self-Photo with firearms			
t.	Self-Photo drinking alcohol			
u.	Photo of romantic partner			
v.	Photo of friends			
w.	Photo of family members			
x.	Comments regarding sexual activities			
y.	Comments regarding alcohol			
z.	Comments regarding drugs			
aa.	Comments regarding your participation in activities which are in violation of University Policy			
bb.	Comments regarding personal beliefs and values			

9. Are there any photos or comments on your social network site that you would NOT want current or prospective employers to see?

_____ Yes _____ No

10. If yes, please list them in the space below.

SECTION 3: Internet Use

		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1.	How often do you find it difficult to stop using the Internet when you are online?	1	2	3	4	5
2.	How often do you continue to use the Internet despite your intention to stop?	1	2	3	4	5
3.	How often do others (e.g., partner, children, parents, friends) say you should use the Internet less?	1	2	3	4	5
4.	How often do you prefer to use the Internet instead of spending time with others (e.g., partner, children, parents, friends)?	1	2	3	4	5
5.	How often are you short of sleep because of the Internet?	1	2	3	4	5

6.	How often do you think about the Internet, even when not online?	1	2	3	4	5
7.	How often do you look forward to your next Internet session?	1	2	3	4	5
8.	How often do you think you should use the Internet less often?	1	2	3	4	5
9.	How often have you unsuccessfully tried to spend less time on the Internet?	1	2	3	4	5
10.	How often do you rush through your (home) work in order to go on the Internet?	1	2	3	4	5
11.	How often do you neglect your daily obligations (work, school, or family life) because you prefer to go on the Internet?	1	2	3	4	5
12.	How often do you go on the Internet when you are feeling down?	1	2	3	4	5
13.	How often do you use the Internet to escape from your sorrows or get relief from negative feelings?	1	2	3	4	5
14.	How often do you feel restless, frustrated, or irritated when you cannot use the Internet?	1	2	3	4	5

Instructions: Please answer the following questions about your use of the Internet using the following scale. *Please circle your response.*

SECTION 4: Other's Use of Your Personal Profile

Instructions: Use the following rating scale to indicate your level of agreement that you would be OK with **prospective or current employers or Winthrop athletic department staff and coaches** having the following information about you.

Personal Information	WOULD BE OKAY to share with employer or Winthrop staff	Would NOT share with employer or Winthrop staff
a. Email Address		
b. Home Address		
c. Phone Number		
d. Academic Status (School)		
e. Hometown		
f. Birthday		
g. Sexual Orientation		
h. Relationship Status		
i. Interests		
j. Group Affiliations		
k. Political Affiliations		
l. Religious Beliefs		
m. Self-Photo (traditional)		
n. Self-Photo (humorous/goofy)		
o. Self-Photo (sexy/provocative)		

p. Self-Photo (athletic)		
q. Self-Photo semi-nude		
r. Self-Photo in the nude		
s. Self-Photo with firearms		
t. Self-Photo drinking alcohol		
u. Photo of romantic partner		
v. Photo of friends		
w. Photo of family members		
x. Comments regarding sexual activities		
y. Comments regarding alcohol		
z. Comments regarding drugs		
aa. Comments regarding your participation in activities which are in violation of University Policy		
bb. Comments regarding personal beliefs and values		

SECTION 5: Student Athlete's and Social Media

- As far as you know, does Winthrop athletics have a social media policy?
 - Yes _____
 - No _____
 - I don't know _____
- If yes, what does it mention? If no go to question 3.

- As far as you know, does your individual team have a social media policy?
 - Yes _____
 - No _____
 - I don't know _____
- If yes, as far as you are concerned, do you follow the policy put in place by Winthrop athletics or your coach? If no go to question 5.

- Has anyone on your team been penalized because of something they may have put on their social media profiles?
 - Yes _____

- b. No _____
- c. I don't know _____

6. If yes, why? If no go to question 7.

7. Do you know anyone another athlete, NOT on your team who has been penalized because of something they may have put on their social media profiles?

- a. Yes _____
- b. No _____
- c. I don't know _____

8. If yes, why? If no go to question 9.

9. Do you think that Winthrop is educating its athletes about hazardous social media issues regarding athletes?

- a. Yes _____
- b. No _____
- c. I don't know _____

10. If yes, how? If no, why?

11. Do you think athletic departments or individual teams should have social media bands?

- a. Yes _____
- b. No _____
- c. I don't know _____

12. If yes, why? If no why?

[illegible]

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